

WHAT WELL-DRESSED WOMEN WILL WEAR

By ANNE RITTENHOUSE

Paris Cuts Women's Clothes to the Bone



NEW FRENCH HAT CALLED REVI DE NICE

It is of pleated chestnut colored tulle, with a bouquet of little ostrich plumes at the side.

THE conservation of wool is an established fact in France and America. It is a fact that will entirely change our conception of apparel.

Silk will rule. The world has a surplus of other materials, it would seem, from statistics, and yet the foundation stone of conservation will extend throughout the fashionable clothes "for the period of the war."

The fundamental idea of saving has so penetrated the consciousness of our people, the propaganda is so widespread and vital that the historian of the future will surely look with extraordinary interest upon the psychological change that took place in 100,000,000 people in eight months.

There are changes in a nation that do not create surprise when they are thrust upon it by an invading army in war, but the change in America is one of spirit. There is money aplenty, men by the millions, industries at full speed, and yet, with wealth and resources, 100,000,000 people have turned a somersault in their attitude toward material possessions.

Change in Our Attitude Toward Possessions

It is extraordinary. It is profoundly interesting and stimulating. It is the acorn which may grow into a national oak of towering height and strength.

It has struck at the core of our national spirit. It has brought us back to the days of our Puritan ancestors. It has made us middle class in the best sense of the term. To-day it is a passion to save. Yesterday it was our passion to spend.

We reversed our entire national outlook in six months, not "for the purpose of aggrandizement or conquest, but for the relief of oppression and the freedom of small nations." Who after this can dare to say that we are not, in the final judgment, a spiritual people? The passion for conservation wiped out of existence the fashion for flowing robes made of piteous material. Whenever a slim silhouette has been thrust into the fashions, whenever an extremely short and narrow skirt has been offered to women, critics galore have risen in their bickering and denounced women as immodest, indecent and vain to the uttermost degree.

The Slim Silhouette Means Practical Patriotism

There is no such bickering to-day, however. The critics of women's clothes remain silent. A man looks appraisingly at a woman gowned in a conservation costume and nods his head in approval, as though she carried a flag.

There is no more talk about indecency. The talk hinges upon the patriotism shown in the slenderness of silhouette and in the scarcity of materials worn. Therefore, fashion and national approval go hand in hand. Unless we are mockingly indecent, and there is no chance of that to-day, there is none to rise and call us outrageous.

The excessive décolletage of two years ago would create a storm of protest in any public place. Giggling, painted women with mere belts held over their shoulders by slipping bands of rhinestones, would be frowned down by men in khaki and by those in civilian clothes.

And yet women may go on the street with skirts so short and narrow that they closely resemble trousers, and laced army boots or puttees that reach well above the calf of the leg, and not a glance is given them that expresses contempt or disapproval.

Short Skirts, Short Coats And Army Capes

The new cuts in Paris, as well as those that are launched in America, show these skirts. Some are so narrow that they might cause discomfort if it were not that their shortness gave freedom of movement.

Coats are short when they belong to suits. Army capes ripple down the figure when warmth is needed.

The cape will be exceedingly smart this season, so you who have one of these garments tucked in the closet mind it well, for in a few weeks you may be able to swing it on with the bravado adopted by all those women who are in war activities or would like to be.

Capes and long waistcoats that reach half way to the knees are substitutes for coats in the absence of suits, although the really smart thing is the Eton or the bolero jacket, as far as the American fashions are concerned.

The early French clothes sent to this country before the present exhibitions in Paris,



DARING INDIAN GOWN

Worn by Mlle. Mirka, of the Theatre Femina. Corset of gold embroidered on pink tulle; the tunic is gold with red fringe. A band of gold and pearls with gold aigrettes forms the headdress.

GOWN WORN AT THE FOLLIES BERGERE

It was exploited by Mlle. Monteville and is of midnight blue satin with paillettes of satin. Notice how it is caught up at the ankles.

showed the short jacket cut much after the manner of those worn by the French soldiers in Algiers, and often supplemented by the brilliant scarlet or yellow sash or an immense suede belt pulled through several buckles in front.

Eton Jackets Are Only For the Slim

The Eton jacket is not for the woman with hips, however, and, unless she has been able to reduce her figure to the proportions of a planked shad, it is wiser for her to look upon other models with more approval.

There are short coats that hang straight from the shoulders to a finger length below the waist and are slightly belted in such a manner that the waistline is casually defined.

Because of its limitations, this short jacket cannot be the ruling fashion. None know that better than the French artists, so they have sent over loose coats of silk poplin, and the American designers have turned out a new cape which reaches to the hips, is slim in outline and fastens at the neck with a high rolling collar.

The poplin coats, as well as those made of satin, Shantung and other silks, are often sleeveless, after the manner of the twelfth century tunics, and the waistcoat blouse that is worn beneath is an exact copy of the mediæval garment for men. It wrinkles loosely over the figure, from the chin or collar bone to the hips; it is fastened on a straight line with unimportant buttons, and its long, slightly wrinkled sleeves flare out over the knuckles of the hand.

Mediæval Corsets In Contrasting Colors

The designers do not find it necessary to match these mediæval corsets to the rest of the costume. They often make a brilliant contrast in both fabric and color. Matelasse is an admirable material for them when the rest of the suit is of plain, sober stuff.

There are other coats that hang in loose lines, with deep, pear-shaped arm-holes, belts put below the waistline, and long waistcoats resembling those worn by Louis XIV. These are extensively worn by the smart women in France and are of exaggerated length.

One of the best French models shown this month has such a waistcoat that reaches just to the point of the knees and is fastened in a straight line from there to the chin.

Starting out with the foundation stone of the new Paris fashions, which are based on the conservation of other materials than wool, and remembering well that you must not bulge or flare or provoke discussion as to your extravagance in the usage of fabric, it is wise to go on to the minor adjuncts of fashion.

Revival of Silk Poplin For Coat Suits

The revival of silk poplin is a bit of news that appeals to the majority of women. You know, this fabric makes admirable coat suits, and with the modern activity of nearly every woman in this country there will not be such



LOOSE THREE-QUARTER COAT

Sapphire blue silk and wool poplin. Worn at a French theatre by Mlle. Madeleine James.

a wide demand as usual for frocks that need constant cleaning and laundering.

The late spring and summer will probably usher in a vast array of women dressed in silk poplin, Shantung, the thinnest gabardine, satin and dark foulard.

The tailored suit which is adopted by such numbers of women doing active relief work has already set its impress upon the fashions, and it is quite probable, despite the talk of the dressmakers, that coat suits of silk poplin in black, beige, brown and blue will rise to unusual heights of popularity. Let us hope this may come about. It is not nice to remember that there are 30,000 unemployed workers in the suit trade.

The incoming of lace, which has been a pronounced feature of the French exhibitions of spring clothes, is puzzling. Lace is not cheap, and we were told that it was very difficult to get in Europe because of the invasion of Belgium and Northern France. Evidently, however, there has been a great deal of lace turned out in Paris, and the French designers have determined to use it up and to produce a wave of popularity for it.

Dinner gowns are of black, white and cream lace, and they are elaborately touched up with threads of silver and gold.

Scant lace flounces are draped over slim linings of satin and taffeta. Lace bodices will be returned for usage under coat suits, and blouses that fall below the waist and are girdled with vividly colored ribbons will be added



HAT OF CERISE STRAW

The brim faced with silk. There is a woollen cord going round the top of the crown, with two ends falling over the side of the hat.

new coat of mail for women as the spring approaches. Is it a recognition of their first victory toward suffrage and the fact that they may be counted as warriors to-day in civic, national and war work?

Hats Give Color to Sombre Spring Frocks

The dressmakers insist that the spring frocks will be sombre in color, and, taking them at their word, the milliners say that an accentuating note must be given by the hats. Women are not at the best in the springtime, when they turn themselves out as sandwiches of dark blue, black and gray. A touch of color gives a ripple of happiness to every costume.

The milliner takes a dark hat and enlivens the entire costume by running a thread of scarlet, Egyptian blue or Chinese yellow wool around the crown.

The milliners are determined that brilliant hues shall break out against dark costumes as a notice to all concerned that we are not entirely unhappy and depressed.

It is said by those who study the effect of color on temperament that a touch of scarlet gives one the most victorious feeling, the inside attitude of a conqueror.

If the milliners knew this, they are acting up to it, for the new straw hat is of brilliant red and flaunts at the side its cord of wool with two tassels. It has a high crown and a slightly rolling brim, which makes it dangerous for the majority of women and especially for any woman who is over twenty-five years old.

The feathered turban has taken a strong hold on the smart French woman, and she puts wings, aeroplane-like, upon the oblong shape to give it an attitude of bravado and daring. None of these wings are tilted as they should be, or in what we might call a normal manner. They look as though they were the planes of an airship caught in a gale of wind and performing unusual gyrations.

Smartest Coats Are Loose And Sleeveless

France likes the sleeveless idea in garments so much that she has built new coats that droop over the shoulders but have no sleeves. This is a mediæval idea that did not seem to interfere with the comfort of the men and women of the twelfth century, when the weather was as cold as now and the houses 100 per cent colder.

Among the materials that France offers to America in the building of these sleeveless coats is a corded silk and wool poplin. It used to be worn by us. It was made into frocks and wraps and turned out in those dolmans that were trimmed with bugles and paillettes and edged with fur.

This season the dolman has been replaced by the loose, shapeless, sleeveless coat. This came over from France, where it was worn on one of the smart stages by an actress who knows how to dress.

All the American shops are looking to the French theatre to-day for inspiration, and the theatres themselves have burst into a new bloom of life and beauty through the presence of so many thousands of American soldiers on leave with money in their pockets.

The coat shown to-day is of sapphire blue silk and wool poplin, is without sleeves and has a deep shoulder yoke and a loose, thick sash knotted in front.

Indian Costumes and Head-Dresses in Paris

The extraordinary popularity of the high headdress now worn by the smart French women in the evening, is the outcome of the French incorporation of Indian apparel in modern costumery. Naturally, they have not copied the apparel of our primitives in every detail. They have merely allowed it to suggest to their fertile brains a new channel through which to exploit their genius.

An army officer in Paris who went to the opera one night and saw the amount of high headdresses made of jewels and colored strands of ostrich spray, said it looked like a pow-wow of Indians. He had served his term in Arizona and knew of what he spoke.

The gowns on the stage in France show not only the Indian headdress, but entire Indian costumes worn as fashionable apparel in a brilliant third act in which the heroine represents Callot or Cheruit as well as she does the playwright.

GOWN FROM FRENCH THEATRE

It is worn by Mme. Simone, of the Theatre Antoine, in Paris. The unusual skirt is of tissue of silver faced with red, and the corsage is embroidered with pearls, brilliants and steel. There are narrow shoulder straps and no sleeves.

There is a faint suggestion of a return to the use of velvet against white gowns in the summer, which is seen in a new frock of white and black silk jersey. It is shown along with the white flannel suits.

The tunic of white falls over a skirt which has a wide band of black velvet as its hem, and, above this band, on the tunic, is an applique ornamentation of velvet picked out with silver.

A few of the Eton suits of white flannel have black velvet collars and cuffs and a broad black velvet ribbon sash tied loosely in front.

It is said that white pique will also be revived as another war-time fashion, made with a long waistcoat of brown or black velvet fastened with silver buttons.

The New Coat of Mail Made of Silver Tissue

Not only Cheruit, but many other French dressmakers, have lent their ear to making a pronounced fashion out of silver tissue. Two years ago we grew excessively weary of evening gowns made of superimposed pieces of tulle on a metallic foundation, and when the thought of silver and gold tissue presents itself as a fashion we turn away from it in a petulant manner.

But wait! This revival of a coat of mail for women, the warrior's uniform of ancient days which no modern fighter would touch, is another and a more pleasing thing than the evening gown of metallic cloth.

Entire tunics, in the twelfth century fashion, are made of tarnished silver dropped from neck to knees, or longer, over skirts of blood red or midnight blue satin or velvet. Except for the costliness of the material, the tunics have all the simplicity of primitive dressing. Their introduction into the early spring fashions has brought about a quantity of silver used in every way.

A Gown Boadicea Might Have Worn

Mme. Simone, of the Theatre Antoine, in Paris, is wearing, I hear, a wonderful gown which is being copied for this country. It is of silver cloth faced with red, hanging in panels on the ground over a slim, tight skirt that clings to the figure as she walks. The warrior-like corsage is embroidered with pearls, brilliants and flashes of cut steel. To it she adds a warrior's headdress made of the same jewels as in the corsage and mounted on silver cloth.

Wherever silver can be flicked in and out of a frock to enliven it, the designer loses no chance of trying out her ingenuity through this channel. When she abandons the Russian blouse of gold and bronze metallic cloth, which drops over a skirt of bronze satin, she takes the same material and uses it in bands, cuffs and high, wrinkled collars that inclose the chin like a fence.

It is a strange idea, this bringing out of a



JERSEY FROCK FOR YOUNG GIRL

It is of black and white silk jersey, with bands of black velvet embroidered in silver. There are long, loose sleeves.

to suits of white flannel, matelasse and jersey.

By the way, white flannel has slid into the limelight. Palm Beach approves of it. Smart women say they like it better than jersey. Once upon a time it was the accepted summer garb of our leisure millionaire class of men, but we have no such class to-day, and the decks of yachts and other pleasure craft have been placed in the category of things that were.

But white flannel for women has been introduced as a fashion that expects approval. It will undoubtedly get it. The weave of the new material is quite thin and pliable. It is cooler than serge. It does not wrinkle like pongee.

Short jackets of it which either end at the waist or run to the hips are often interlined, and there is an odd little trick of putting bands of black or white silk over the seams of the bodice in lieu of a lining.